

The Sun

WILLIAM M. LAPPAN.

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If our friends who favor us with manuscripts for
 publication will be so kind as to send them, they
 must in all cases send stamps for their postage.

Brief Sketch of a Candidate for the
 "Command of Our Army."

Specific charges of a scandalous nature
 against Gen. LEONARD WOOD are numerous
 and serious.

But they can be refuted, and by investi-
 gation they may be disproved.

Doubt is common and widespread as to
 the validity of Gen. Wood's advertised
 claims to public gratitude for services
 rendered.

But further evidence may remove
 these doubts, or further services may
 establish a new and better claim.

Indignation is intense in many quar-
 ters over the injustice to the hundreds
 of honorable and experienced army offi-
 cers who have been wronged by the un-
 exemplified promotion of this physician.

But if supreme military genius is in
 truth his, it will be the patriotic duty of
 the victims of injustice to suffer and be
 silent.

We can understand how all the fore-
 going considerations might be brushed
 aside by a personal friendship such as
 that which the former Lieutenant-Colonel
 of the Rough Riders has conceived and
 entertains for the former Colonel of the
 same regiment. Upon that friendship
 rests still the warm glow and glamour
 of the camp fire beside which the two
 friends sat when they exchanged vows
 and partitioned the earth and the future
 between themselves.

But can even a friendship like unto
 that of Theodore ROOSEVELT for Dr.
 LEONARD WOOD overlook the awful con-
 sequences of a mistake in its estimate
 of the competency of an untried and
 practically inexperienced amateur soldier
 swiftly lifted to the highest military
 command?

Charges of personal unworthiness may
 be disproved, doubts as to administra-
 tive merit may be dispelled, resentments
 at outrageous injustice to other officers
 may be stilled. One doubt remains, and
 with it a terrible responsibility on the
 part of the President who for friend-
 ship's sake takes the chances and de-
 creases the appalling risk.

It is not that the consequences of such
 a mistake will fall directly upon the
 ardent friend who has risked the experi-
 ment.

They will be measured, perhaps, on
 some day and field unforeseen, in the
 heart blood of tens of thousands of Ameri-
 cans whose lives have been unwittingly
 sacrificed in advance to a personal favor-
 ite and an unfit commander.

Homestead in Congress.

The Hon. JOHN R. THAYER of the Wor-
 cester Fur Club has the honor of rep-
 resenting the Third Massachusetts district
 in Congress. The Republican Heart-of-
 the-Commonwealth Interim, The Wor-
 cester Republican squabble and glare
 at one another. So Mr. THAYER, a popu-
 lar and excellent citizen in his rather
 noisy way, was elected to the Fifty-
 sixth and Fifty-seventh Congresses; and
 the Fifty-eighth Congress is not or-
 phaned of him. When he is not hunting
 rabbits or foxes in Milbury or Oakham,
 he hunts the tariff or corporations. We
 had supposed that he was as happy as
 a man of his intelligent self-appreciation
 ought to be.

Alas! even the robustness have their
 troubles. Last Thursday he caught the
 Speaker's eye. The Speaker wanted to
 know why Mr. THAYER uprose. The
 gentleman from Worcester said he rose
 to a question of privilege. State it,
 said the Speaker. Mr. THAYER began
 to "state."

"Mr. Speaker, since we have been called together
 in extraordinary session at an extraordinary time,
 two weeks before it seemed that it was necessary—"

Evidently there is an ordinary session of
 the Worcester Fur Club in November
 and Mr. THAYER was vexed at being in-
 terrupted by Mr. ROOSEVELT. Mr.
 PAYNE of New York was rude enough to
 interrupt, too. Mr. PAYNE made the
 point of order that Mr. THAYER's state-
 ment was not a statement of a question
 of personal privilege. Uncle Joe agreed,
 but allowed Mr. THAYER to go on. Finally
 he relieved himself of this speech:

"In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that 400 men
 have been here assembled for four days and sub-
 stantially nothing has been accomplished, with the
 prospect that for the next four days nothing will
 be accomplished; and in view of the fact that many
 who live in places accessible to the Capitol have
 already returned home, and others wish to go; and
 in view of the fact that this Cuban question was
 thoroughly discussed at the last session and no
 substantial amount of time is needed to pass or
 reject matters at the special session, I want to
 ask if a person would be suspected of being derelict
 in duty or open to criticism by this House if he
 should return to the quiet of his own home and the
 bosom of his own family there to be engaged in
 getting up the winter's wood or mending his fences,
 if they perchance need mending, providing he
 returns home with the understanding, left with the
 chair, that he would return to the Capitol at
 any time when the six or eight prominent members
 of Congress (who constitute Congress) notified
 him that there was anything to do?"

The Speaker said that Mr. THAYER's
 question of personal privilege "hardly
 amounted to a faint assault upon the
 dignity of a parliamentary inquiry." Mr.
 PAYNE remarked dryly that he was
 "somewhat inclined to ask unanimous
 consent that the gentleman be excused
 from attendance." Nobody understood
 or pitied the feelings of Mr. THAYER.
 To be sure, nobody but Mr. THAYER
 would have said that nothing had been
 accomplished in the first four days or
 would be accomplished in the next. The
 plan for putting the Cuban commercial
 treaty into effect was preparing. The
 Committee on Ways and Means was ap-
 pointed. The bill machines, resolution
 machines, memorial and petition ma-

chines were grinding out full grists.
 The private pension bills were growing
 into a mountain. The Congressional
 Record shows that Congress was doing
 business enough. What, then, was the
 matter with the gentleman from Wor-
 cester? Nothing but homesickness. He
 could hear the dogs barking. He wanted
 to be back with the boys of the Fur
 Club. He should have been excused on
 account of urgent private business.

His remarks about the "six or eight
 prominent members of Congress" might
 seem to be the voice of envy. Nothing
 of the sort. He is prominent himself
 and glad of it. In his autobiography in
 the Congressional Directory he con-
 fesses that he "has been one of the lead-
 ing lawyers in Worcester county for
 many years." He is not jealous of his
 brother leaders in Congress. He pants
 to make the fur fly in Barre or Sutton.
 That's all. A "turkey-shoot" Thanksgiv-
 ing Day will take some of the jaundice
 out of him.

Will the Democrats Oppose a Treaty
 With Panama?

The proposed free coinage of silver at
 the ratio of 16 to 1 was a dead issue in the
 Presidential campaign of 1900, and the
 appeal made to the voters in that year
 by Democratic leaders was based mainly
 on the anti-imperialist demand for a
 surrender of the Philippines. The re-
 sult was an overwhelming victory for
 Mr. McKINLEY, who obtained a majority
 of 137 electoral votes, as against a ma-
 jority of 95 secured four years before.
 A mistake no less fatal will be made if
 the Democratic steering committee of
 the Senate resolve to oppose a canal
 treaty with Panama and to go before the
 country in 1904 with the plea that the
 Spooner act required the President, on
 the rejection of the former treaty by
 Colombia, to open forthwith negotiations
 with Costa Rica and Nicaragua for the
 construction of a canal by way of Lake
 Nicaragua. That act, we are told, was
 mandatory, and the question as to
 which some Democrats desire to invite
 the judgment of the people, is whether
 Mr. ROOSEVELT shall be suffered to
 violate or evade a law.

The issue thus framed is technical
 rather than substantial. It raises a
 nice question for international lawyers,
 rather than for laymen, to determine.
 Is it true that the authority vested by
 the Spooner act in the President to
 negotiate for permission to construct a
 canal across the American Isthmus has
 lapsed because the ownership of that
 Isthmus has passed from the United
 States of Colombia to the Republic of
 Panama? Should not the plain intent
 of the act be carried out, irrespective
 of the particular political entity which
 at a given moment may possess sov-
 ereignty over the territory through which
 the canal is to run? Did the Spooner
 act have any other primary purpose
 than to authorize the procurement of a
 franchise for a canal through the Isth-
 mus of Panama, provided such franchise
 could be secured within a reasonable
 time? Is not Mr. ROOSEVELT justified
 in law and equity when he regards the
 independent State of Panama as subro-
 gated for the particular political entity
 which happened to control the Isthmus
 when the Spooner act was passed?

The common sense of the American
 people will not hesitate for a moment
 as to the answer which such a question
 ought to receive. The reply undoubt-
 edly should be in the affirmative. Any
 other answer would imply that Congress,
 when passing the Spooner act, not only
 contemplated the construction of a canal
 at Panama, but also meant to insist that
 the Government then installed at Bogota
 should continue to retain control of the
 Isthmus at the time when the purchase
 money agreed upon should be paid. It
 would imply that, unless the bonus of
 \$10,000,000 should be received by Presi-
 dent MARIQUIN, the attempt to buy a
 franchise for a Panama canal should be
 definitely abandoned. Such an impli-
 cation would be preposterous. It was per-
 fectly known to Congress, when the
 Spooner bill was under discussion, that
 the Colombian Administration headed
 by President MARIQUIN was merely a
 de facto Government, the outcome of
 usurpation and violence; that it existed
 in defiance of the Colombian Constitution
 of 1886, and that it might be overturned
 at any moment by a popular uprising;
 just as the Republic of New Granada,
 with which we concluded the Treaty of
 1846, was overturned and superseded by
 another political entity. Remembering
 that our rights and duties with relation
 to Panama under that treaty continued to
 exist, notwithstanding the transfor-
 mation of the other party to the contract,
 Congress took for granted that the
 authority vested in the President by the
 Spooner act would continue to be exer-
 cised, no matter what political changes
 might take place in a country which has
 been for eighty years the theatre of
 incessant revolution. Such an assump-
 tion was inseparable from a transaction
 with a de facto Government which, no-
 toriously, owed to force its precarious
 tenure of power.

Neither in the form of common sense
 nor in that of international law is there
 any room for doubt that the Spooner act
 would have authorized Mr. ROOSEVELT
 to continue negotiations—provided in
 his judgment, they could be completed
 within a reasonable time—with Presi-
 dent MARIQUIN's successor, had a new
 Executive been raised to power by a
 popular upheaval in the Colombian cap-
 ital. How is the situation altered by
 the fact that the change of govern-
 ment took place at Panama instead of at
 Bogota? Is not secession as legitimate
 as revolution in the case of a country
 long record of political separation, fulfilled,
 authorized or attempted? As we have
 formerly pointed out, scarcely was the
 Republic of Colombia recognized by us
 in 1826, than Venezuela withdrew, nor
 was it long before Quito or Ecuador fol-
 lowed her example. In 1853 the Repub-
 lic of New Granada adopted a Constitu-
 tion by which the right was expressly
 granted to every province to declare
 itself independent. Subsequently to
 that date, as well as previously, there
 were repeated secessions, conspicuous
 among the provinces which, at one time
 or another, declared themselves inde-

pendent being Panama, Veragua, An-
 tioquia and Cartagena. We were at
 liberty to recognize any one of those
 seceding Commonwealths, first as a de
 facto and ultimately as a de jure Govern-
 ment, and it would have been morally
 our duty to do so had any one of them
 been threatened with such sweeping
 sacrifice of its vital interests as Pan-
 ama suffered when the canal treaty was
 rejected by the usurping Government
 at Bogota.

Some Democratic newspapers have
 contrasted the course pursued by Mr.
 ROOSEVELT with the position taken by
 Mr. CLEVELAND in his first administra-
 tion, when a revolution broke out at
 Panama and our Government practi-
 cally sided with the central Colombian
 Government against the revolutionists.
 Mr. CLEVELAND took a different position
 at that time because the situation was
 fundamentally distinct. The inhabi-
 tants of the Isthmus then had compara-
 tively little to complain of, whereas at
 the present juncture independence was
 the alternative to ruin. Even as it was,
 Mr. CLEVELAND may well have wished
 that he had permitted the revolutionists
 to attain their end, for in that event
 the greater part of the town of Colon
 might have escaped destruction by a con-
 flagration.

Morally and legally, Mr. ROOSEVELT
 has a perfect right under the Spooner
 act to negotiate for a canal franchise
 with the political entity which has suc-
 ceeded to Colombia's former sov-
 ereignty over the Isthmus.

He Begins Well.

It is far too early to form an opinion
 of the aptitude of the Hon. JOHN SHARP
 WILLIAMS for his difficult post as minority
 leader in the House of Representatives,
 but his first week in that capacity makes
 the judicious rejoice. He talks sense.
 He wastes no time. He is alert. Best
 of all, he seems to have a sense of humor.
 A little dialogue, spoken in the House
 Thursday, may give some idea of his
 concision and his humor. The Clerk
 had just read the bill introduced by Mr.
 PAYNE, the chairman of the Committee
 on Ways and Means, "to carry into effect
 a convention between the United States
 and the Republic of Cuba." Mr. PAYNE
 moved to adjourn. Mr. WILLIAMS
 wanted to ask a question. Then began
 the dialogue from which this specimen
 is snipped:

"Mr. WILLIAMS—You are going to call a meeting
 of the Committee on Ways and Means and report
 the bill to the House?"

"Mr. PAYNE—Certainly."

"Mr. WILLIAMS—I wanted to know the magnitude
 of the outrage we would be expected to submit to."

"Mr. PAYNE—This is simply promptness, not
 outrage."

"Mr. WILLIAMS—That may be from your stand-
 point, speaking in comparison with some other
 things that have occurred."

"Mr. PAYNE—We will be most happy to consult
 with the gentleman on the matter."

"Mr. WILLIAMS—At what hour is the meeting of
 the committee?"

"Mr. PAYNE—At half-past 10."

"Mr. WILLIAMS—Cannot you make it ten instead
 of half-past 10 and give us half an hour longer?"

COOK'S VERGAS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: This is an
 age of character building, and the person who
 makes a specialty of any useful venture is the
 one who is most respected. I am a Yankee of
 good port, Ind. has founded the Yankee of Golden
 Character Society. Mr. Cook is the only person in
 the world who has ever secured a two life cover.
 Mr. Cook has been in the world for many years.
 He will start on Jan. 1, 1904, visiting every nation's
 capital and every capital of States. His duty is
 to visit the character and usefulness of every
 person he meets. To complete one must not swear,
 chew, drink, smoke or have any ill habits. Any
 laborer, farmer, inventor, teacher, benefactor,
 professor or any class who make a specialty of
 anything may compete. No objections to any
 age, sex, color, nationality or religion.

Mr. WILLIAMS's predecessor, the Hon.
 JAMES DANIEL RICHARDSON, was as
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 and DANIEL pooled, and as ponderous
 as ten thousand elephants followed by
 thirty thousand camels carrying dic-
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 terested. At times it wants to be
 amused. The man who can combine
 public business with the pleasure of the
 House, so to speak, who never bores it,
 seldom yawns or struts or babbles, is
 competent, quick of mind and slow to
 anger, not keyed up too high to be in
 tune with the House—that is the man to
 lead. Mr. WILLIAMS may or may not
 be that kind of man. At any rate, he
 begins pretty well.

The Sunday Golfer.

Practically everything suits the New
 York Sabbath Committee except the
 Sunday golfer. The committee, round-
 ing out the forty-seventh year of its
 activity, declares in its annual report
 that New York ranks high for its Sunday
 order and quiet. In 1901 only 734 ar-
 rests were made for violations of the
 Sunday laws, and in 1902 only 472 viola-
 tions were taken up. The city's popula-
 tion is 3,700,000, and the showing is a good
 one; it bears out the reputation of the
 community for peace, lawfulness and
 order. Only the Sunday golfer merits
 severe reprobation, says the committee,
 but he is a pretty bad lot. The commit-
 tee says of golf:

"It is the peculiar diversion of prosperous people
 who can ordinarily take their pleasures on any
 day of the week. There seems less excuse for it
 on Sunday than for other sports of the less favored
 classes."

Justice GAYNOR, who is ever on the
 alert to discover and right injustices,
 asks pertinently, "Why not arrest the
 golf players as well as the ball players?"
 Better, why arrest the ball players at all
 if they annoy no one? An Alderman
 from Harlem who sees hundreds playing
 golf at Van Cortlandt Park every Sun-
 day threatens to prohibit their playing
 if boys are not allowed to play baseball.
 He is against special privileges. The
 committee recognizes the justice of his
 attitude:

"Hence those who insist on Sunday golf where
 other games are illegal, increase the class prejudices
 and hatreds so deplorable at present, and on the
 day which is meant to suppress our individual
 selfishness they say in substance: 'Who cares for
 the caddies, the links keepers and the objectors, if
 only we can have our Sunday sport?' This is still
 a feature of suburban life that meets with mixed
 acceptance."

They would dare to say "Who cares
 for the Alderman?"—at least not in his
 presence or his district. The golfers
 are as the sands of the sea in number,
 but an Alderman is greater than a mul-
 titude. We advise the golfers to watch
 out, or else they may find themselves

locked up. The Sabbath Committee,
 plus the Alderman, can overcome all
 of them.

Instructions From Alaska.

The political forwardness of the
 Republicans of Alaska might excite the
 envy of the Democrats of Vermont,
 whose participation in a national elec-
 tion is secondary rather than direct.
 Alaska has no electoral votes, and can-
 not, therefore, take part in a Presidential
 election. It has no such representation
 in Congress, through a Territorial De-
 legate, as is accorded to Arizona, New
 Mexico, Oklahoma and Hawaii, but it
 has already elected delegates to the
 next Republican national convention.
 Not yet called, and the time and place
 for which are not yet determined. Here
 is the communication sent from Juneau
 by the Republican national commit-
 tee-man for Alaska; in absolute indispen-
 sability to recognized usages, it is addressed
 to "The President, Washington, D. C.":

"Territorial convention to-day elected J. G.
 REID, CHARLES S. JOHNSON, WILLIAM T. PERKINS,
 W. D. GRANT, J. W. LEE, OSCAR POOT, Delegates
 national convention. Instructed for ROOSEVELT."

Alaska is not entitled to take part,
 except by courtesy, in the nomination of
 a President and Vice-President by either
 political party. The last Republican con-
 vention admitted no delegates from
 Alaska. The last Democratic convention
 at Kansas City had six. "Instructing"
 delegates not summoned to a national
 convention not yet called is certainly
 a demonstration of superior political
 confidence.

The Republican national committee,
 which fixes the time and place for hold-
 ing the next national convention, will
 meet in Washington on Dec. 11.

"Speaker CANNON" sounds a very odd and natural
 if it had been the habit of years—Washington
 Evening Star.

In justice to the excellent gentleman a
 humble intentions, however, he should
 be styled SERVANT CANNON until he should
 forfeit that title.

Although the special session of Congress
 called by President ROOSEVELT has been
 in existence only five business days and a
 good share of its time has been taken up
 in the work of organization, its members
 have not neglected the necessities of the
 nation so far as public buildings are con-
 cerned. Already one measure providing
 for the erection of Federal buildings to
 house all first, second and third class post
 offices in Pennsylvania, New York, New
 Jersey, New Hampshire, New England
 and the District of Columbia, has been
 introduced for buildings in certain
 towns and cities.

Deputy Police Commissioner PIPER's
 rules of the road, designed to simplify
 the management of vehicular traffic in the
 city, and to make it easier to enforce.
 The confusion in the city thoroughfares is
 due more to a lack of system in directing
 the traffic than to any other cause. If the
 police will enforce Capt. PIPER's rules in-
 telligently and drivers will obey them
 willingly, not a little of the congestion and
 confusion in the highways will be avoided.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: This is an
 age of character building, and the person who
 makes a specialty of any useful venture is the
 one who is most respected. I am a Yankee of
 good port, Ind. has founded the Yankee of Golden
 Character Society. Mr. Cook is the only person in
 the world who has ever secured a two life cover.
 Mr. Cook has been in the world for many years.
 He will start on Jan. 1, 1904, visiting every nation's
 capital and every capital of States. His duty is
 to visit the character and usefulness of every
 person he meets. To complete one must not swear,
 chew, drink, smoke or have any ill habits. Any
 laborer, farmer, inventor, teacher, benefactor,
 professor or any class who make a specialty of
 anything may compete. No objections to any
 age, sex, color, nationality or religion.

Mr. WILLIAMS's predecessor, the Hon.
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 solemn as ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL
 and DANIEL pooled, and as ponderous
 as ten thousand elephants followed by
 thirty thousand camels carrying dic-
 tionaries. The House wants to be in-
 terested. At times it wants to be
 amused. The man who can combine
 public business with the pleasure of the
 House, so to speak, who never bores it,
 seldom yawns or struts or babbles, is
 competent, quick of mind and slow to
 anger, not keyed up too high to be in
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 to visit the character and usefulness of every
 person he meets. To complete one must not swear,
 chew, drink, smoke or have any ill habits. Any
 laborer, farmer, inventor, teacher, benefactor,
 professor or any class who make a specialty of
 anything may compete. No objections to any
 age, sex, color, nationality or religion.

Mr. WILLIAMS's predecessor, the Hon.
 JAMES DANIEL RICHARDSON, was as
 solemn as ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL
 and DANIEL pooled, and as ponderous
 as ten thousand elephants followed by
 thirty thousand camels carrying dic-
 tionaries. The House wants to be in-
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